

Center for Community Progress

Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference

Responding to Crisis:
Building an Equitable and
Resilient Future

SEPTEMBER 7-9, 2022
HILTON CHICAGO | CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Center for Community Progress

Reclaiming Vacant Properties


CONFERENCE 2022



Center for
**COMMUNITY
PROGRESS**

Vacant Spaces into Vibrant Places

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Conference Hotel

Hilton Chicago
720 South Michigan Ave,
Chicago, IL 60605
T: 312-922-4400

WI-FI

Complimentary
Wi-Fi is available
in the hotel lobby
located on the
first floor.

About the Center for Community Progress

The Center for Community Progress fosters strong, equitable communities where vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties are transformed into assets for neighbors and neighborhoods. Founded in 2010, Community Progress is the leading national nonprofit resource for urban, suburban, and rural communities seeking to address the full cycle of property revitalization.

Welcome to Chicago

From the Mayor of Chicago

I'm honored to welcome you to Chicago for the 2022 Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference.

The theme of this year's conference—Building an Equitable and Resilient Future—could not be more apt for our city. The story of Chicago is a story of resilience and rebuilding in the face of crisis. But our focus must also be on building a future that is equitable. Too many of our neighborhoods of color, rich with history, culture, and heritage, have been left behind. And too many Black and Brown residents have been displaced or still shoulder the burden of a legacy of racial segregation.

That's why I am so proud of the many Chicago projects you will hear about over the next three days, that focus on lifting up the communities that need it most. Projects like INVEST South/West, which has raised over a billion dollars in public and private investments to revitalize communities in the South and West Sides. I am proud that you will have the chance to walk the streets along the Mile of Murals, see the revitalized homes in Chatham, and experience the factory housing-turned-art-studios in historic Pullman.

I am excited for you and the hundreds of people you will meet this week to bring such positive energy around preserving, maintaining, and reviving underutilized spaces back into meaningful benefits for the community—including affordable housing, urban farms, workforce development opportunities, and more. For the many Chicagoans in attendance, I encourage you to boast about our city's successes with pride, and to take lessons from your peers across the country and apply them at home.

Welcome to Chicago, and enjoy your time!

Sincerely,
Lori Lightfoot
Mayor of the City of Chicago



Convener's Welcome

Dear friends, old and new: If you'd told me three years ago, after the conclusion of our Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference in Atlanta, that it would be so long before we saw each other again, I wouldn't have believed you. I couldn't have imagined we'd face a global pandemic, and again suffer and heal as a nation through a renewed examination of racism.

So it is with immense joy that I welcome you to the tenth Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference. I am delighted that you are joining us in Chicago to respond to these national and global crises so we can build a more equitable and resilient future together.

RVP focuses on how we revitalize disinvested communities to meet the needs of residents, create new opportunities for and with marginalized communities, and rectify unjust land use, housing, and related policies that contribute to decline in the first place.

Having spent some of the most critical years of my life in Chicago—it was here I started a family and achieved my dream of becoming a PhD—I'm honored to return and give back to this community. To live in Chicago is to live in two cities: the North Side and South Side—one side thriving and the other still fighting decades of disinvestment. I am excited for our local partners and presenters to share stories of hope and perseverance, and to shine a light on this beautiful city's revitalization efforts.

Over the next three days, let's engage in meaningful conversations about how we can continue to put equity first in our work to revitalize communities—with residents as partners.

I extend a special thank you to the staff, planning committee, speakers, and everyone else who has played a role in making this conference happen despite larger than ever challenges. And thank you to the many friends, supporters, and funders of Community Progress. Your collaboration, innovative ideas, and participation make it possible for us to turn vacant spaces into vibrant places.

Sincerely,

Dr. Akilah Watkins
President and CEO
Center for Community Progress





Thank You to Our Partners

Host Committee and Content Advisors

Thank you to the individuals whose insight and effort shaped the Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference. Their participation made it possible to develop helpful, relevant, and forward-looking sessions that will benefit practitioners around the country.

Kulsum Ameji, Legal Aid Chicago

Kelly Anoe, Legacy Foundation

Margaret Cassidy, City of Chicago

Liz Castaneda, South Suburban Land Bank

Nicole Chavas, Greenprint Partners

Robin Cline, NeighborSpace

Nina Davis-Burton, Woodland Child Development Center, Inc

Margaret Decker, City of Chicago

David Doig, Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives

Deveda François, Community Assets Builders Association

Deborah Moore, Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago

Estefany Ruiz, Greater Southwest Development Corporation

Matthew Stern, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Brian White, eProperty Innovations

Publicity

We're grateful to the volunteer publicity partners who provided invaluable help with spreading the word about the Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference. They were instrumental in helping to attract the diverse crowd from across the nation that makes RVP worthwhile to attend.

Chicago Community Trust

City of Chicago

Congress for the New Urbanism

Cook County Land Bank Authority

Georgia Association of Land Banks

Grounded Solutions Network

Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

Michigan Association of Land Banks

New York Land Bank Association

Sponsors

The Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference is made possible through the generous support of many agencies, organizations, and companies who are committed to breaking the cycle of property vacancy, abandonment, and deterioration. This support benefits hundreds of communities across the country.

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ArtVP 2022

What is Your Blueprint to Vibrancy?

Every year, the Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference hosts an interactive art installation from a local artist that gives attendees a chance to imagine community in a new way.

This installation by Samantha Grassi celebrates the possibilities of vacant property by inviting you to answer the question: **What is your blueprint to vibrancy?**

In this space, a boarded-up building and vacant lot are transformed into an imagined space for gathering, gardening, and performance.

Join us in International Ballroom South during breaks throughout the conference for interactive to draw your vision of a reactivated and transformed space and display it on a “gallery wall” fashioned out of a reclaimed chain link fence panel.

Schedule

Thursday

10:30 – 11:00a: Kevin King, The King’s Canvas (Art)
3:30 – 4:00p: Daniel Egusquiza, Barrio Alegria (Salsa Dance)

Friday

10:15 – 10:45a: Derek Craig, Young Coffee Productions (Music)

Located in Intl.
Ballroom South,
2nd Floor



Agenda at a Glance

Wednesday, September 7, 2022

11:00a – 5:30p	Registration Open	8th St. Lobby
2:00p – 5:30p	Exhibitor Area Open	Intl. Ballroom South
2:00p – 5:30p	ArtVP Open (more info on page 8)	Intl. Ballroom South
2:00p – 3:30p	Welcome and Opening Plenary: Dr. Ibram X. Kendi	Intl. Ballroom North
3:30p – 4:00p	Break	Intl. Ballroom South
4:00p – 5:30p	Breakout Sessions #1	
	Addressing Vacant Properties in the Unique Market Conditions of Black Middle Neighborhoods	Waldorf
	Community-Driven Approaches to Commercial Corridor Revitalization	Williford B
	Transforming the Worst Abandoned Properties Into the Best Affordable Homes: Strategies to Revitalize East and West Baltimore	Williford C
	Land Banking 101: What Is a Land Bank and What Does It Do?	Marquette
	When One Size Doesn't Fit All: Overcoming the Challenge of Replicability Across State Lines	Williford A
4:00p – 5:30p	Movie Screening: Folded Map™ Project—The Movie	Private Dining 2
4:00p – 6:00p	Training Seminars #1	
	When Traditional Code Enforcement Doesn't Work: Creating a Culture Shift to Build Capacity and Address Problem Properties	Joliet
	Where Do We Go From Here? Developing a Compelling, Actionable Plan for Your Community's Future	Private Dining 3
4:00p – 6:30p	Mobile Workshops #1	
	Caring in Public: Community-Managed Open Space as Social Infrastructure	8th St. Lobby
	Historic Pullman: The Intersection of Affordable Housing, Historic Preservation, and the Arts	8th St. Lobby
	Infrastructure and Art: The Glenwood Avenue Arts District and Rogers Park's Mile of Murals	8th St. Lobby
	Workforce Development, Collaboration, and Rebuilding Chicago's South and West Sides	8th St. Lobby
5:30p – 7:00p	Welcome Reception	Intl. Ballroom South

Thursday, September 8, 2022

8:00a – 5:30p	Registration Open	8th St. Lobby
8:00a – 5:30p	Exhibitor Area Open	Intl. Ballroom South
8:00a – 5:30p	ArtVP Open (more info on page 8)	Intl. Ballroom South
8:00a – 9:00a	Breakfast	Intl. Ballroom South
9:00a – 10:30a	Breakout Sessions #2	
	Resident-Owned and Resilient: Strategies for Community Engagement, Building Financial Autonomy, and Emergency Planning	Joliet
	Land Banks and Partnerships in Suburban Communities	Williford A
	Moving From Code Enforcement to Code Encouragement	Williford C
	How State Laws Govern Local Problem Property Regulation—and How to Change Them for the Better	Williford B
	Leveraging Underutilized Land to Help Communities Build Wealth	Marquette
	Vacant Land as an Opportunity for Workforce Development and Economic Growth	Waldorf

Thursday continued next page >

Agenda at a Glance

Thursday, September 8, 2022		
10:30a – 11:00a	Break	Intl. Ballroom South
11:00a – 12:30p	Breakout Sessions #3	
	Reclaiming Vacant Property to Improve Community Health: The One Rockford Project	Williford A
	Financing Strategies to Turn Vacant Structures into Quality Housing	Waldorf
	Designing Programs for Equitable, Effective Neighborhood Stabilization	Marquette
	The Role of Anchor Institutions in Community Revitalization	Joliet
	Recognizing and Reducing the Disparate Impact of Property Tax Assessment Systems	Williford B
	Improving Resident Access to Land: Lessons from Detroit	Williford C
11:00a – 1:00p	Training Seminars #2 <i>lunch provided</i>	
	Make It Easy: Applying Behavioral Science to Address Vacant Property	Private Dining 3
	Understanding the Past to Inspire the Future: Using Social Media to Show Vacant Buildings Through a New Lens	Private Dining 2
11:00a – 1:30p	Mobile Workshops #2 <i>lunch provided</i>	
	Cutting Residential Vacancy in Half: A Success Story From Chatham	8th St. Lobby
	Inclusive and Equitable Processes for Repurposing Closed Public Schools	8th St. Lobby
	Neighborhood Associations Uplifting Resident Voices and Reclaiming Blocks and Public Spaces: Case Study of RAGE in Englewood	8th St. Lobby
	Preserving Affordability With Purchase-Rehab Lending on Vacant Building	8th St. Lobby
12:30p – 2:00p	Lunch on Your Own	
1:30p – 4:00p	Mobile Workshops #3	
	Faith, Farms, and Harmony: Reclaiming Community in Gary, Indiana	8th St. Lobby
	Slow Rolling Through Greater Bronzeville: Past, Present, Future	8th St. Lobby
	How Women Developers Are Championing Community Reinvestment in West Woodlawn, Chicago	8th St. Lobby
2:00p – 3:30p	Breakout Sessions #4	
	Centering Community History in Data Collection and Vacant Land Reuse	Williford B
	VAD Is Global: How Other Countries Respond to Vacant Property Challenges	Williford A
	Harnessing the ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund to Address Vacancy and Strengthen Communities	Williford C
	Reactivating “Lost Spaces” to Stabilize Neighborhoods and Prevent Displacement	Waldorf
	Strategic Code Enforcement Depends on Resident Trust: Models From Syracuse and Austin	Marquette
	Using Land to Help Communities Recover and Heal From Trauma	Joliet
3:30p – 4:00p	Break	Intl. Ballroom South
4:00p – 5:30p	Plenary Session: Same Address, Miles Apart: How the Folded Map™ Project Generates Conversations About Segregation in Chicago	Intl. Ballroom North

Tell us what you thought of each session you attended. **Take our survey!**



Friday, September 9, 2022

8:00a – 10:15a	Registration Open	8th St. Lobby
8:00a – 10:15a	Exhibitor Area Open	Intl. Ballroom South
8:00a – 10:15a	ArtVP Open (more info on page 8)	Intl. Ballroom South
8:00a – 8:45a	Breakfast	Intl. Ballroom South
8:45a – 10:15a	Breakout Sessions #5	
	Implementing Rental Regulation Programs to Improve Health and Advance Equity	Williford A
	Large-Scale Adaptive Reuse: Case Studies From Buffalo and Memphis	Marquette
	Supporting Developers of Color in Affordable Housing and Economic Development	Williford C
	Case Studies of Vacancy, Abandonment, and Deterioration in Rural Areas	Joliet
	Extreme Weather Events, Vacancy, and Recovery	Private Dining 2
	Home Repair: Designing a High-Impact Loan or Grant Program	Waldorf
10:15a – 10:45a	Break	Intl. Ballroom South
10:30a – 12:30p	Training Seminars #3	
	Building Community Power Through Public Spaces	Private Dining 4
	Tracking and Communicating Your Impact	Private Dining 2
10:45a – 12:15p	Breakout Sessions #6	
	Art as a Community Development Tool: A Look at INVEST South/West	Williford A
	Disrupting Exploitive Property Tax Systems: How Communities Can Examine and Reform Their Practices for Public Good	Joliet
	Data-Driven, Cross-Agency Approaches to Transform Code Enforcement	Williford B
	How Public-Private Land Bank Partnerships Can Foster Equitable Revitalization and Affordable Housing Opportunities	Waldorf
	Navigating Vacant Properties Through the Brownfield Process: How to Meet Requirements, Access Data, and Secure Funding	Marquette
	Activating Vacant Lots to Promote Climate Resiliency	Williford C
12:30p – 2:00p	Closing Plenary: Responding to Crisis: Building an Equitable and Resilient Future	Intl. Ballroom North

Looking for Speaker Bios?

visit:
[reclaimingvacant
properties.org](http://reclaimingvacantproperties.org)

Breakout Sessions by Topic

TOPICS	Wednesday, September 7 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM	Thursday, September 8 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM
Arts, Placemaking, and Culture		
Code Enforcement		Moving From Code Enforcement to Code Encouragement <i>(Page 21)</i>
Disaster Recovery and Resiliency		Resident-Owned and Resilient: Strategies for Community Engagement, Building Financial Autonomy, and Emergency Planning <i>(Page 20)</i>
Economic and Workforce Development	Community-Driven Approaches to Commercial Corridor Revitalization <i>(Page 16)</i>	Vacant Land as an Opportunity for Workforce Development and Economic Growth <i>(Page 21)</i>
Housing Stabilization	Addressing Vacant Properties in the Unique Market Conditions of Black Middle Neighborhoods <i>(Page 16)</i> Transforming the Worst Abandoned Properties Into the Best Affordable Homes: Strategies to Revitalize East and West Baltimore <i>(Page 16)</i>	How State Laws Govern Local Problem Property Regulation—and How to Change Them for the Better <i>(Page 21)</i> Leveraging Underutilized Land to Help Communities Build Wealth <i>(Page 21)</i>
Institutional and Private Sector Partnerships		Land Banks and Partnerships in Suburban Communities <i>(Page 20)</i>
Land Banks and Land Banking	Land Banking 101: What Is a Land Bank and What Does It Do? <i>(Page 17)</i>	Land Banks and Partnerships in Suburban Communities <i>(Page 20)</i>
Mortgage and Tax Foreclosure	When One Size Doesn't Fit All: Overcoming the Challenge of Replicability Across State Lines <i>(Page 17)</i>	
Planning, Data, and Evaluation		
Public Safety and Public Health		
Rehab and Reuse of Buildings	Community-Driven Approaches to Commercial Corridor Revitalization <i>(Page 16)</i>	
State and Federal Policy and Programs	When One Size Doesn't Fit All: Overcoming the Challenge of Replicability Across State Lines <i>(Page 17)</i>	How State Laws Govern Local Problem Property Regulation—and How to Change Them for the Better <i>(Page 21)</i>
Vacant Land Stewardship		Vacant Land as an Opportunity for Workforce Development and Economic Growth <i>(Page 21)</i>

Thursday, September 8 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM	Thursday, September 8 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM
	Reactivating “Lost Spaces” to Stabilize Neighborhoods and Prevent Displacement <i>(Page 27)</i> Centering Community History in Data Collection and Vacant Land Reuse <i>(Page 26)</i>
	Strategic Code Enforcement Depends on Resident Trust: Models From Syracuse and Austin <i>(Page 27)</i>
	Harnessing the ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund to Address Vacancy and Strengthen Communities <i>(Page 27)</i> Using Land to Help Communities Recover and Heal From Trauma <i>(Page 28)</i>
Recognizing and Reducing the Disparate Impact of Property Tax Assessment Systems <i>(Page 23)</i>	VAD Is Global: How Other Countries Respond to Vacant Property Challenges <i>(Page 27)</i>
Reclaiming Vacant Property to Improve Community Health: The One Rockford Project <i>(Page 22)</i> The Role of Anchor Institutions in Community Revitalization <i>(Page 22)</i>	
Financing Strategies to Turn Vacant Structures Into Quality Housing <i>(Page 22)</i>	
Recognizing and Reducing the Disparate Impact of Property Tax Assessment Systems <i>(Page 23)</i>	
Designing Programs for Equitable, Effective Neighborhood Stabilization <i>(Page 22)</i>	Centering Community History in Data Collection and Vacant Land Reuse <i>(Page 26)</i>
Reclaiming Vacant Property to Improve Community Health: The One Rockford Project <i>(Page 22)</i>	
Financing Strategies to Turn Vacant Structures Into Quality Housing <i>(Page 22)</i>	
Improving Resident Access to Land: Lessons From Detroit <i>(Page 23)</i>	Harnessing the ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund to Address Vacancy and Strengthen Communities <i>(Page 27)</i>
	Reactivating “Lost Spaces” to Stabilize Neighborhoods and Prevent Displacement <i>(Page 27)</i> Using Land to Help Communities Recover and Heal From Trauma <i>(Page 28)</i>

Breakout Sessions by Topic

TOPICS	Friday, September 9 8:45 AM – 10:15 AM	Friday, September 9 10:45 AM – 12:15 PM
Arts, Placemaking, and Culture		Art as a Community Development Tool: A Look at INVEST South/West <i>(Page 31)</i>
Code Enforcement	Home Repair: Designing a High-Impact Loan or Grant Program <i>(Page 30)</i> Implementing Rental Regulation Programs to Improve Health and Advance Equity <i>(Page 29)</i>	Data-Driven, Cross-Agency Approaches to Transform Code Enforcement <i>(Page 32)</i>
Disaster Recovery and Resiliency	Extreme Weather Events, Vacancy, and Recovery <i>(Page 30)</i>	Activating Vacant Lots to Promote Climate Resiliency <i>(Page 33)</i>
Economic and Workforce Development	Supporting Developers of Color in Affordable Housing and Economic Development <i>(Page 30)</i>	
Housing Stabilization	Home Repair: Designing a High-Impact Loan or Grant Program <i>(Page 30)</i> Case Studies of Vacancy, Abandonment, and Deterioration in Rural Areas <i>(Page 30)</i> Supporting Developers of Color in Affordable Housing and Economic Development <i>(Page 30)</i>	
Institutional and Private Sector Partnerships	Large-Scale Adaptive Reuse: Case Studies From Buffalo and Memphis <i>(Page 29)</i>	How Public-Private Land Bank Partnerships Can Foster Equitable Revitalization and Affordable Housing Opportunities <i>(Page 32)</i>
Land Banks and Land Banking		How Public-Private Land Bank Partnerships Can Foster Equitable Revitalization and Affordable Housing Opportunities <i>(Page 32)</i>
Mortgage and Tax Foreclosure		Disrupting Exploitive Property Tax Systems: How Communities Can Examine and Reform Their Practices for Public Good <i>(Page 31)</i>
Planning, Data, and Evaluation		Data-Driven, Cross-Agency Approaches to Transform Code Enforcement <i>(Page 32)</i> Navigating Vacant Properties Through the Brownfield Process <i>(Page 32)</i>
Public Safety and Public Health	Implementing Rental Regulation Programs to Improve Health and Advance Equity <i>(Page 29)</i> Case Studies of Vacancy, Abandonment, and Deterioration in Rural Areas <i>(Page 30)</i>	
Rehab and Reuse of Buildings	Large-Scale Adaptive Reuse: Case Studies From Buffalo and Memphis <i>(Page 29)</i>	Art as a Community Development Tool: A Look at INVEST South/West <i>(Page 31)</i>
Vacant Land Stewardship		Navigating Vacant Properties Through the Brownfield Process <i>(Page 32)</i> Activating Vacant Lots to Promote Climate Resiliency <i>(Page 33)</i>

Session Descriptions

Wednesday, September 7, 2022

Welcome and Opening Plenary

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Race, Disinvestment, and Revitalization: A Conversation with Dr. Ibram X. Kendi

Location: Intl.' Ballroom North

Every community has some vacant properties. But systemic vacancy is the kind that is so widespread it changes the character of a neighborhood. Systemic vacancy is a result of deep issues like concentrated poverty, economic decline, and market failure, which are often rooted in historically racist policies. Time and experience have clearly shown that neighborhoods of color have experienced historic disinvestment that more often leads to systemic vacancy, the effects of which persist today.

In this plenary, we are honored to be joined by Dr. Ibram X. Kendi to discuss disinvestment in communities of color, and what can be done. Dr. Kendi is the Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities at Boston University, and the founding director of the BU Center for Antiracist Research. He is a contributing writer at *The Atlantic* and a CBS News racial justice contributor. His relentless and passionate research puts into question the notion of a post-racial society and opens readers' and audiences' eyes to the reality of racism in America today. Dr. Kendi's lectures are sharp, informative, and hopeful, serving as a strong platform for any institution's discussions on racism and being antiracist.

Dr. Kendi is also the author of many highly acclaimed books including *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*, which won the National Book Award for Nonfiction, making him the youngest ever winner of that award. He had also produced five straight #1 *New York Times* bestsellers, including *How to Be an Antiracist*, *Antiracist Baby*, and *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You*, co-authored by Jason Reynolds.

To learn more about Dr. Kendi, visit prhspeakers.com/speaker/dr-ibram-x-kendi



Photo: Stephen Voss

SPEAKER:
Dr. Ibram X. Kendi

Addressing Vacant Properties in the Unique Market Conditions of Black Middle Neighborhoods Location: **Waldorf**

Black middle neighborhoods hold a rich cultural history of early Black achievement, success, and family and social networks. Largely formed out of the civil rights movement of the 50s and 60s, Black middle neighborhoods were places where residents could finally invest in long-term assets. But over the decades, these neighborhoods faced challenges that went beyond that of their white counterparts: damaging racist policies, appraisal bias, slow recovery from the devastating foreclosure crisis, declining market demand, heirs' property issues, and more. Join our panel of Black middle neighborhood practitioners to learn more about the unique and often hidden challenges they face. Leaders will share the strategies they use to prevent vacant properties from occurring and how they address those that exist, as well as how they are working to reinvent and strengthen these neighborhoods' appeal to Black middle households—all while maintaining and growing opportunities for Black households to grow wealth through home and business ownership.

SPEAKERS: Lori Gay, Neighborhood Housing Service of Los Angeles County; Becki Kenderes, Grandmont Rosedale Development Corporation; Marcia Nedland, Fall Creek Consultants LLC and National Middle Neighborhoods Initiative; Deborah Moore, Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago; Nedra Fears, Greater Chatham Initiative; Michael Randall, Grandmont Rosedale Development Corporation

Community-Driven Approaches to Commercial Corridor Revitalization Location: **Williford B**

Commercial vacancy is an often-overlooked component of a comprehensive approach to addressing vacant property. In this session, speakers from the E. Warren Development Corp of Detroit, Michigan, and the Economic Action Group and the Western Reserve Port Authority of Youngstown, Ohio will share how they took community-driven approaches to revitalizing their commercial corridors. Strong community partnerships and strategic planning can lead to successful transformation of a city's business corridors. Attendees will learn about the importance of inclusive community partnerships—including door-to-door surveys and resident engagement—and how to navigate the extensive barriers to acquiring and redeveloping commercial properties. The combination of connected partners, engaged local businesses, and available commercial space will advance economic development in a community. Join us to learn how to replicate these models in your cities.

SPEAKERS: Daniel Bancroft, Economic Action Group; Nick Chretien, Economic Action Group; Joseph Rashid, E. Warren Development Corp; Maureen Anway, Invest Detroit

Transforming the Worst Abandoned Properties Into the Best Affordable Homes: Strategies to Revitalize East and West Baltimore Location: **Williford C**

The historically redlined and hypersegregated neighborhoods of East and West Baltimore have been struggling with a crisis of abandonment, deterioration, population decline, and concentrated poverty that long predated the pandemic and global climate crisis. In this session, local leaders will discuss how they are applying scalable, place-based strategies to rebuild severely deteriorated abandoned rowhomes and repopulate distressed neighborhoods while protecting legacy residents. Participants will also learn how this neighborhood-level strategy has, in recent months, begun to expand into a citywide campaign to revitalize thousands of deteriorated homes. Join us to hear about the challenges local organizations face in rebuilding Baltimore's blighted properties, their redevelopment and wealth-building strategies, and their visions for scaling up their neighborhood-based work into a pathway for Baltimore's equitable regrowth.

SPEAKERS: Sean Closkey, ReBUILD Metro; Regina Hammond, Rebuild Johnston Square Neighborhood Organization; Bree Jones, Homes; Daniel Kravetz, ReBUILD Metro; Alan Mallach, Center for Community Progress

Land Banking 101: What Is a Land Bank and What Does It Do?

Location: Marquette

This introductory course on land banking will provide foundational knowledge on how land banks can be critical tools to acquire, maintain, and transition problem properties into productive use. In this session, participants will learn when a land bank is the appropriate instrument to address problem properties, and how to identify the problem properties to be addressed. Experts will educate participants on the fundamentals of how land banks are structured to conform to their local social, political, and market environments.

SPEAKERS: Brian Larkin, Center for Community Progress

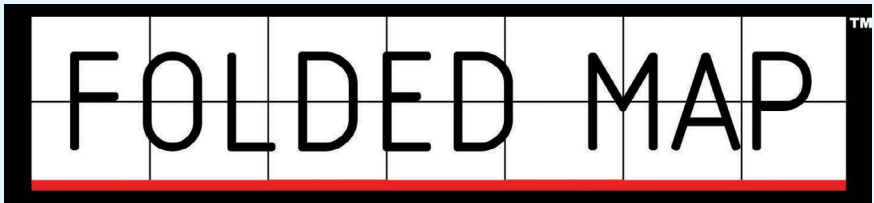
When One Size Doesn't Fit All: Overcoming the Challenge of Replicability Across State Lines **Location:** Williford A

How easily do lessons learned in one state translate across state lines, when the legal and regulatory environments within each state are so different? In this session, we will showcase a new LISC report that details how New York—through a blend of laws, technical assistance, advocacy, and funding opportunities—enabled communities to tackle more than 11,000 “zombie” properties and hold banks accountable through the mortgage foreclosure process. We'll hear from expert panelists from Jacksonville, Florida and Toledo, Ohio about the challenge of replicability of successful practices across state lines, but also how certain lessons related to principles, approaches, and partnerships used in New York can be applied anywhere.

SPEAKERS: Tarik Abdelazim, Center for Community Progress; Helene Caloir, LISC; David Mann, Lucas County Land Bank; Joe Schilling, Urban Institute; Kristopher Smith, LISC Jacksonville

Movie Screening

4:00 PM – 5:30 PM



Folded Map™ Project—The Movie

SPEAKERS:
Tonika Lewis Johnson,
The Folded Map™ Project

Location: Private Dining 2

Join artist and activist Tonika Lewis Johnson for a screening of *Folded Map™ Project—The Movie*, a film documenting her powerful visual investigation connecting residents at corresponding addresses on the North and South Sides of Chicago. The Folded Map™ Project began as a photo series and evolved into a multimedia exploration with interactive maps and video interviews, showing the visual and economic legacies of redlining, segregation, and racial discrimination in Chicago. Learn about the project's inspiration, origins, and transformation over time. Following the screening, Johnson will answer audience questions.

Training Seminars #1

4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

When Traditional Code Enforcement Doesn't Work: Creating a Culture Shift to Build Capacity and Address Problem Properties

Location: Joliet Pre-registration was required

Local governments that are strapped for resources often feel they only have the capacity to use traditional code enforcement tools, like fines and the threat of criminal penalties. But these punitive tactics do not affect all communities equally. Though intended to address poor neighborhood conditions, they in fact disproportionately harm communities that have already experienced decades of disinvestment, and contribute to neighborhood decline. There is a better way. In this training, we will share lessons from code enforcement directors and inspectors who are taking a new community-based approach to code compliance, where code enforcement plays a more intentional role in supporting property owners who want to comply. Attendees will learn how to invest time in more proactive approaches focused on providing residents with the knowledge, training, tools, and resources to address problem properties. This session will also focus on strategies to shift the internal culture within code enforcement teams; on using data to gain support for a compliance-focused approach; and on creating opportunities to meaningfully engage work with the community to address problem properties and make neighborhoods safer, healthier, and more vibrant.

SPEAKERS: Joe Dulin, City of Peoria, Illinois; Ashley Elias, City of Peoria, Illinois; Matt Kreis, Center for Community Progress; Cordaryl Patrick, City of Decatur, Illinois; Jake Dishaw, City of Syracuse, New York; Michelle Sczpanski, City of Syracuse, New York

Where Do We Go From Here? Developing a Compelling, Actionable Plan for Your Community's Future **Location: Private Dining 3** Pre-registration was required

At its core, widespread vacancy is the result of an imbalance between supply and demand. How can your community shift that imbalance and retain and attract residents and businesses? In order to catalyze strategic economic, housing, and open space development, communities must be able to articulate a clear, compelling vision for their future. Join us for this in-depth training in which we share examples of places that have developed comprehensive, integrated city-wide plans; explain the key questions your community should be asking during a planning process; help you avoid planning pitfalls; and identify ways to infuse equity and justice into your community's vision. Attendees will be able to put these concepts into practice through an interactive exercise designed to help you jump-start your community's planning process.

SPEAKERS: Kathleen Duffy, SmithGroup; Dan Kinkead, SmithGroup

Mobile Workshops #1

4:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Caring in Public: Community-Managed Open Space as Social Infrastructure **Location: 8th Street Lobby** Pre-registration was required

Community gardens are increasingly understood as an important part of cities' social infrastructure—the physical spaces, organizations, and actions that support civic life. But local control of these spaces can be beyond the reach of many communities that often lack key institutional resources such as insurance, 501(c)3 status and funds to invest in environmental remediation and infrastructure. In this mobile workshop, participants will visit four community-managed spaces in four different Chicago communities on the South and West Sides. They will meet garden leaders and gain an understanding of how the spaces are stewarded and what they mean to neighbors. Participants will learn about the model of NeighborSpace, Chicago's nonprofit land trust for community-managed open spaces, which takes responsibility for land ownership, permitting, insurance, environmental remediation, and water access—allowing community groups to focus on community organizing and programming. Participants will learn about the NeighborSpace model, its history, funding, programs, and governance.

SPEAKERS: Paula Acevedo, El Paseo Community Garden; Robin Cline, NeighborSpace; Benjamin Helphand, NeighborSpace

Historic Pullman: The Intersection of Affordable Housing, Historic Preservation, and the Arts **Location: 8th Street Lobby** *Pre-registration was required*

Nestled in the South Side of Chicago, the Pullman neighborhood was built in the 1880s as a company town for the eponymous railroad company. Its streets were packed with distinctive rowhouses for rail workers and their families. However, after the deindustrialization of the 1950s, the neighborhood deteriorated and was eventually threatened with demolition. Residents rallied to preserve their unique historic community and secured landmark status to protect the remaining buildings. Over the course of eight years, Artspace, in partnership with Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives and Pullman Arts, transformed dozens of abandoned rowhouses and lots into thirty-six units of affordable live/work housing for artists and their families. In this mobile workshop, we will tour this historic neighborhood and hear from local artists now living in the Pullman Artspace Lofts, as well as community partners who helped bring this vision to fruition. Attendees will also become familiar with challenges associated with revitalization of these lofts, the importance of focusing on elevating BIPOC artists at Pullman, and how this unique opportunity and partnership came together to restore these vacant spaces.

SPEAKERS: Ann M. Alspaugh, aMa-Architecture, Inc.; David Doig, Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives; Aneesa Marwah, Artspace Projects, Inc.; Kimberly Moore, Artspace Projects, Inc.

Infrastructure and Art: The Glenwood Avenue Arts District and Rogers Park's Mile of Murals **Location: 8th Street Lobby** *Pre-registration was required*

The story of the Mile of Murals, located along Glenwood Avenue in Rogers Park on the far North Side of Chicago, is the story of resilience in a time of great economic crisis. The 2008 launch of the Mile of Murals project coincided with the start of the Great Recession that led to empty storefronts and foreclosures throughout Chicago. By transforming concrete railroad viaducts and retaining walls into an outdoor art gallery, the Mile of Murals helped create an important community gathering space that put Glenwood Avenue on the map as an arts district. At a time of financial uncertainty, the Mile of Murals drew visitors and businesses to the area and created a sense of community identity for Rogers Park's diverse residents. Although the pandemic forced the reimagining of staple events like the art festival and farmers markets, the rise of outdoor dining created a unique opportunity to position the Glenwood corridor as a more permanent outdoor gathering space for the entire community. Join us for a mobile workshop along the Mile of Murals to hear from local businesses and organizers how the mural project has impacted the community.

SPEAKERS: Al Goldberg, Al Goldberg Real Estate, Glenwood Avenue Arts Festival; Carolina Juarez, Rogers Park Business Alliance

Workforce Development, Collaboration, and Rebuilding Chicago's South and West Sides **Location: 8th Street Lobby** *Pre-registration was required*

The Chicago Neighborhood Rebuild pilot program is a massive collaborative effort between public and private stakeholders, developers, workforce development agencies, and the local land bank authority. Its goal is to rehabilitate dozens of single-family and two-flat vacant properties on Chicago's South and West Sides, and sell them to new homeowners. The program also provides transitional jobs and training opportunities for at-risk youth and ex-offenders. In this tour of the neighborhood, attendees will learn about the program's inception and execution, lessons learned, and hear from program partners who can speak to the benefits of this unique collaboration. We will highlight housing projects in various stages of redevelopment and discover how these projects are creating visible neighborhood change and developing wealth-building opportunities for Chicago's communities of color.

SPEAKERS: David Feinberg, Chicago Community Loan Fund; Sean Harden, Chicago Community Loan Fund; LeVar Love, Rosie Investment Corp.

Session Descriptions



Thursday, September 8, 2022

Breakout Sessions #2

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Resident-Owned and Resilient: Strategies for Community Engagement, Building Financial Autonomy, and Emergency Planning Location: Joliet

Join this session to learn about efforts underway to rebuild resilient communities in the Rogue Valley's resident-owned manufactured housing communities. On Labor Day 2020, a devastating wildfire in the Rogue Valley displaced thousands of Latinx families and destroyed much of the affordable housing stock in the region. CASA of Oregon, an affordable housing nonprofit that had already been working in the area, built on their existing relationships and mobilized resources to support a group of local leaders to come together and form a coalition committed to long-term disaster resiliency and financial autonomy. Together, they are rebuilding an affordable manufactured housing community that will be resident-owned and are investing in deliberate efforts to organize residents in several resident-owned cooperatives and plan for future emergency response. Panelists will share resident survey, engagement strategies, leadership strategies, advocacy efforts, emergency planning tools, and financing strategies that have moved these resiliency building efforts forward. After hearing from the panel of partners, participants will have the opportunity to break into small, facilitated groups to review tools used and explore how similar strategies could be utilized in their own communities.

SPEAKERS: Erica Ledesma, Coalicion Fortaleza; Rose M. Ojeda, CASA of Oregon; Tory Clark, North Country Foundation

Land Banks and Partnerships in Suburban Communities

Location: Williford A

Vacancy, disinvestment, and deterioration in the suburbs can be too-often overlooked. However, these communities too require multiple interventions to provide safe, stable, affordable places to live. Working together, land banks, development authorities, nonprofit organizations, and municipalities harness the tools to build suburban community prosperity and reduce vacancy. Offering coordinated interventions heightens their impact, and ultimately translates to a more equitable and resilient future. In this session, speakers from land banks representing suburbs in Illinois and Pennsylvania will discuss the unique role of land banks in suburban communities and how to create effective partnerships. Attendees will come away with a deep understanding of how private-sector development initiatives working together with government powers can have profound impact to reclaim abandoned land in affected municipalities. Attendees will also gain a deeper knowledge of how organizational partnerships, like land banks and community land trusts, can support neighborhood goals like affordable housing creation, preservation, and greener redevelopment techniques to reduce climate change.

SPEAKERS: Elizabeth Castaneda, South Suburban Land Bank; Lavanya Desiraju, Southland Development Authority; An Lewis, Tri-COG Land Bank; Ed Nusser, City of Bridges CLT; Amanda Settelaier, Turtle Creek Valley Council of Governments; Alan Sisco, Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh

Moving From Code Enforcement to Code Encouragement

Location: Williford C

Code enforcement helps create safer, more livable communities. But rather than solely focusing on addressing violations, this session spotlights new approaches that center community engagement and encouragement to ultimately achieve long-term compliance. The City of Peoria, Illinois will detail their pioneering approach to code encouragement, which over the last several years has built community trust and greatly improved code compliance. Session leaders will explain how and why they came to use this approach and discuss programs, outreach efforts, and employee development strategies that any city could implement to deliver on the promise of improving their community.

SPEAKERS: Kaylee Drea, City of Peoria, Illinois, Community Development Department; Joe Dulin, City of Peoria, Illinois, Community Development Department; Ashley Elias, City of Peoria, Illinois, Community Development Department

How State Laws Govern Local Problem Property Regulation—and How to Change Them for the Better

Location: Williford B

State laws set the ground rules of what local governments can and cannot do when dealing with vacant structures and problem properties. When restrictive or outmoded state laws stand in the way of effective local action, the only option is to change them. In this session, we will first explore how state laws define the scope of local government action, and then present two examples where successful organizing changed state laws. This session will also cover the process of making change happen, including how to build coalitions and marshal legislative support around key issues that help revitalize communities and empower local governments to deal with problem properties.

SPEAKERS: Brent Denzin, Denzin Soltanzadeh LLC; Alison Goebel, Greater Ohio Policy Center; Alan Mallach, Center for Community Progress

Leveraging Underutilized Land to Help Communities Build Wealth

Location: Marquette

For decades, widespread vacancy and abandonment, lack of quality affordable housing and jobs, and few amenities have prevented residents on Chicago's South and West Sides from building wealth. Coupled with a history of racist policies and practices like redlining and predatory lending, homeownership—the chief engine of wealth-building in America—is even further out of reach in these neighborhoods. But while vacancy is still too prevalent in Chicago's communities of color, if put into the hands of residents deeply rooted in these communities, the thousands of underutilized properties on the South and West Sides offer great promise. On this panel, we will hear how collaboratives are working to address longstanding issues of vacancy, inequitable access to homeownership, and what they're doing to support Black and Latinx developers.

SPEAKERS: Vicky Arroyo, The Resurrection Project; Lynette McRae, The Chicago Community Trust; Anthony Simpkins, Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago; Richard Townsell, North Lawndale Christian Development Corporation

Vacant Land as an Opportunity for Workforce Development and Economic Growth

Location: Waldorf

Cleaning and caring for vacant lots is a critical part of keeping communities clean, safe, and stable. However, it requires a tremendous amount of labor. In this session, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society will share how they developed a six-week workforce development program to clean and maintain their stock of 12,000 parcels of vacant land. This paid, hands-on job training program is aimed at Philadelphia residents transitioning back into their communities from the Philadelphia prison system or experiencing other barriers to securing and maintaining employment. Program participants learn horticulture, landscape maintenance, greenhouse operations, and carpentry skills, and have access to courses on conflict resolution, health education, and occupational therapy. Through this session, attendees will learn new strategies for securing similar government and community partnerships, learn about the benefits of greening to increase economic opportunities, and the value of recycling dollars within urban communities to benefit residents.

SPEAKERS: Samir Dalal, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society; Keith Green, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society; Majeedah Rashid, Nicetown Community Development Corporation; Gregory Thompson, Institute for the Development of African American Youth, Inc.; Sin Gogolak, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

Reclaiming Vacant Property to Improve Community Health: The One Rockford Project Location: Williford A

One Rockford is a planning process that uses data and community engagement to define a strategy for the Rockford Housing Development Corporation (RHDC). By prioritizing the social determinants of health, the One Rockford effort examined systemic barriers and challenges that prevent people from achieving their personal and economic wellbeing in the wake of the pandemic. In this interactive session, panelists will share the plan's data and engagement results and ask attendees to prioritize the same four approaches to development and vacancy reduction that the RHDC Board examined, based on health and equity implications. Attendees will come away with a better understanding of how to do community-centered engagement with underrepresented populations, be better equipped to do analysis and goal-setting, and understand how to create clear and compelling communications tools that stimulate community ownership of a plan to improve health and reduce vacancy.

SPEAKERS: Ron Clewer, Rockford Housing Development Corporation; Alexandra Miller, Alexandra Miller Consulting, LLC; Zakcq Lockrem, Mend Collaborative; Jerry Lumpkins, Valley Bank

Financing Strategies to Turn Vacant Structures Into Quality Housing Location: Waldorf

When the cost of repairs far outweighs what a house is "worth" on the market, it's easy to see why financing can be one of the biggest hurdles in renovating vacant properties into habitable homes. In this session, experts representing real estate, land banks, and CDFIs will share innovative approaches for every stage of acquiring, developing, and financing vacant property rehab. Participants will come away with a better understanding of different types of financing strategies that can put property revitalization in reach for developers.

SPEAKERS: Mandy Eidson, Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership, Inc.; Brian Larkin, Center for Community Progress; Jay Perlmutter, Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership, Inc.; Kerry Quaglia, HomeHeadquarters, Inc.

Designing Programs for Equitable, Effective Neighborhood Stabilization Location: Marquette

Good program design is essential. It makes interventions like land banks, code enforcement, and demolition more responsive to local needs and helps ensure equitable, effective stabilization of low-income and middle neighborhoods. Showcasing brand new research on program design, this session will provide practical guidance for how to: (1) identify which neighborhoods will benefit most from available funds, (2) design programs that use those funds strategically, and (3) collect data to evaluate and refine programs in the future. We'll focus on how to provide the types of services that benefit not just individual recipients, but the larger community as well.

SPEAKERS: Karen Black, May 8 Consulting, Inc.; Emily Dowdall, Reinvestment Fund; Christa Stoneham, Houston Land Bank

The Role of Anchor Institutions in Community Revitalization Location: Joliet

Anchor institutions can play a critical role in revitalizing a neighborhood. In this session we'll present case studies from Baltimore and Milwaukee where anchor institutions collaborated with residents and businesses to promote community and environmental health and well-being. In Southwest Baltimore, the Bon Secours health center is developing an open space network through short- and long-term development of vacant lots. Meanwhile in Milwaukee, institutions including Harley-Davidson came together to form Near West Side Partners, whose mission is to help the struggling Near West Side neighborhood once again become a great place to live. Join us to hear more about these important case studies of different community planning and engagement models involving anchor institutions, and elevating diverse voices for equitable revitalization.

SPEAKERS: Daniel Greenspan, Bon Secours Mercy Health; Lindsey St Arnold Bell, Near West Side Partners Inc.; Alexa Bosse, Hinge Collective; Timothy Douglas, Bon Secours Community Works

Recognizing and Reducing the Disparate Impact of Property Tax Assessment Systems **Location: Williford B**

While municipalities rely heavily on property tax revenues, the assessment, collection, and delinquency management approaches have and continue to disproportionately impact Black and Brown communities. This disparate impact is most evident in over-assessment in low-income areas, increased percentages of homes on the property tax sale rolls in the over-assessed communities, and increased violent crime and quality of life issues associated with the vacant properties often created through the delinquency management approaches. During this session, panelists will discuss the findings of critical new research on property taxes from the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy, as well as efforts by the Property Tax Appeal Project, an initiative in Detroit and Chicago to provide free legal services to improve homeowners' outcomes during the board of review property tax appeal process. Participants will come away with a better understanding of the disparate impact of current property tax assessments and approaches on Black and Brown communities, and ideas for solutions to prevent families from losing their homes due to unpaid property taxes.

SPEAKERS: Chris Berry, Center for Municipal Finance, University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy; Marie Sheehan, Street Democracy and Coalition for Property Tax Justice; Tiffany Smith, Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago

Improving Resident Access to Land: Lessons from Detroit **Location: Williford C**

As the owner-of-last-resort in a city with more than 140,000 vacant lots, the Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA) has pioneered strategies and tools for acquiring, managing, and disposing of vacant land. To date, the DLBA has sold more than 21,000 lots to residents and sells hundreds more each month. In 2020, the DLBA launched a new comprehensive vacant land policy. This new policy aims to increase resident access to land and builds upon DLBA's long-running Side Lot program to create new channels for selling vacant land. In this session, DLBA staff will discuss the origin, development, and details of every step in the organization's vacant land programs, including bulk acquisition, maintaining properties, preparing properties for sale, listing properties at scale, active inventory management, marketing properties to residents, and completing sales. In addition to this procedural summary, staff will share the underlying philosophy and vision of the new policy, and candidly discuss the past and ongoing challenges of balancing competing interest in the future of the city's vacant land.

SPEAKERS: Roslyn Harper, Detroit Land Bank Authority; Robert Linn-Manor, Detroit Land Bank Authority; Karla Marshall, Detroit Land Bank Authority; Savannah Robbins, Detroit Land Bank Authority

Training Seminars #2

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Make It Easy: Applying Behavioral Science to Address Vacant Property

Location: Private Dining 3 *Pre-registration was required*

Want to reduce repeat code violations, sell hard-to-move land bank properties, and reduce dumping? Simple, scientifically proven behavioral science tactics may provide the answer you've been looking for. In this training, we'll show how to apply the EAST behavioral science framework (make it Easy, Attractive, Social, and Timely) to vacant and deteriorated property issues, highlighting real-world examples from the US and around the world. In the second half of this training, participants will have an opportunity to apply what they've learned by redesigning a form or communication using these behavioral science frameworks. Workshop participants will receive practical advice for how to find opportunities to improve a policy or process, explore barriers to achieving their goals, design innovative solutions, and test and scale solutions that work. Participants are encouraged to bring real-life communications and forms to redesign in this workshop.

SPEAKERS: Kelsey Irvine, The Behavioral Insights Team; Michael Kaemingk, The Behavioral Insights Team

Understanding the Past to Inspire the Future: Using Social Media to Show Vacant Buildings Through a New Lens

Location: Private Dining 2 Pre-registration was required

The Greater Syracuse Land Bank will share how it has partnered with David Haas (@SyracuseHistory) to tell the history of land bank properties and their neighborhoods—most, historically redlined with concentrations of vacant and abandoned property. Using Instagram and other social media platforms, they are changing how current (and future!) Syracuse residents view these buildings and neighborhoods, sharing stories of everyday life to show these homes' potential, and highlighting architectural details instead of broken windows.

@SyracuseHistory chronicles the evolution and resurgence of these neighborhoods by featuring land bank properties being renovated and sharing often-overlooked details that make these old buildings so special. This training will teach you how to turn “likes” into tangible outcomes, and what kind of content generates the most online engagement. Participants will learn how to use social media platforms to engage the community, partner with other content creators to share your story, and use nontraditional content to attract buyers and increase civic pride. Bring your smartphone and log in to Instagram to participate in the conversation during this interactive and engaging training.

SPEAKERS: Shavel Edwards, Greater Syracuse Land Bank; David Haas, @SyracuseHistory; Katelyn Wright, Greater Syracuse Land Bank

Mobile Workshops #2

11:00 AM – 1:30 PM

Cutting Residential Vacancy in Half: A Success Story From Chatham

Location: 8th Street Lobby Pre-registration was required

Chatham, a Black middle neighborhood on the South Side of Chicago, achieved what many disinvested communities dream of: a 50 percent drop in residential vacancy in three years. Nonprofit community development corporation the Greater Chatham Initiative catalyzed placekeeping projects, financial literacy initiatives, technical assistance, and philanthropic, public, and private sector investments. This work helped Chatham retain and attract homeowners and renters to occupy formerly vacant structures, reducing vacancies from 144 buildings in 2018 to 76 buildings in 2021. This mobile workshop will showcase the strategies practitioners in Black middle neighborhoods employ to prevent properties from becoming vacant, to address those that do exist, to reinvent and strengthen their appeal to Black middle households, and to maintain and grow opportunities for Black households to build wealth through home and business ownership.

SPEAKERS: Deborah Moore, Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago; Nedra Sims Fears, Greater Chatham Initiative; Nicole Wheatly, Steps, Inc. Consulting

Inclusive and Equitable Processes for Repurposing Closed Public Schools

Location: 8th Street Lobby Pre-registration was required

In 2013, Chicago closed nearly fifty public schools, concentrated in the South and West Sides. One school, Anthony Overton Elementary in Bronzeville, is the future home of the Overton Center for Excellence, a business, technology, and design incubator. In the meantime, however, it has become the home base for the Creative Grounds initiative, a collaboration that reconnects the community with the former school site. Over the past four years, Overton has hosted dozens of creative projects including art and design installations, workshops, exhibitions, and more recently a mutual aid market, that reflect on the history of the school, celebrate its legacy, and introduce its renewed identity while testing new program ideas. This mobile workshop will provide an overview of the projects and activities that have been organized to keep the school active. We will guide participants through a group activity of designing engagement process and implementation plan based on two approaches: community activation series and creative art and design interventions.

SPEAKERS: Ghian Foreman, Washington Park Development Group; Dennis Milam, Borderless Studio; Paola Aguirre Serrano, Borderless Studio

Neighborhood Associations Uplifting Resident Voices and Reclaiming Blocks and Public Spaces: Case Study of RAGE in Englewood

Location: 8th Street Lobby Pre-registration was required

RAGE is a grassroots neighborhood association of nearly 400 residents of Greater Englewood. It is the only multi-issue, multi-platform residents' association that builds external agency for a community that has experienced historic disinvestment and generational poverty. RAGE has also been at the heart of initiatives to revitalize underutilized and vacant spaces in Englewood. In this mobile workshop, attendees will see how residents band together to reclaim their blocks. We'll share information about innovative programs, like Chicago's Large Lots program—which allows residents to purchase up to two vacant lots for \$1 to build community and promote peace and art—and RAGE's Buy the Block homeownership education program. Join us to learn more about this approach to growing a community culture into a movement that uplifts and focuses on the positive attributes of Englewood.

SPEAKERS: Asiaha Butler, Resident Association of Greater Englewood

Preserving Affordability with Purchase-Rehab Lending on Vacant Building

Location: 8th Street Lobby Pre-registration was required

As cities focus on attracting developers to buy, fix up, and resell vacant, run-down homes in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, often, the end sales price is beyond the reach of the neighborhood's current residents. One potential solution that promotes affordable homeownership while still eliminating vacant buildings is making rehab mortgages more accessible to first-time homebuyers. In this mobile workshop, we'll share how a multi-stakeholder group helped twelve families transform twelve vacant, deteriorated buildings in the West Humboldt Park neighborhood into newly renovated owner-occupied homes. This trip into the field will include a tour of the homes and conversations with some of their current owners. Participants on the tour will also learn about the mechanics of purchasing rehab mortgage lending and learn how a city can use TIF funds as forgivable loans to leverage this investment while preserving affordability.

SPEAKERS: John Groene, Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago; Tiffany Smith, Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago

Mobile Workshop #3

1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Faith, Farms, and Harmony: Reclaiming Community in Gary, Indiana

Location: 8th Street Lobby Pre-registration was required

The Emerson neighborhood was once the heart of the city of Gary, Indiana. Gary was founded in 1903 as a company town for the over 10,000 workers of the local steel mill, and Emerson was home to a downtown that thrived up through the mid-twentieth century. But over the decades, as fewer workers were needed to operate the steel mill thanks to advances in technology, people left, the tax base shrank, and the once-vibrant city now faced a glut of vacant and deteriorated properties. In recent years, however, Families Anchored in Total Harmony—the outreach arm of a local church—has begun to reclaim some of those abandoned spaces through urban farming and grassroots organizing. On this tour, attendees will see examples of how to repurpose vacant and deteriorated spaces and create a vision for neighborhood revitalization in a community with limited financial resources.

SPEAKERS: Frieda Graves, FAITH Farms; Curtis A. Whittaker, Families Anchored in Total Harmony, Inc.

Bike Tour: Slow Rolling Through Greater Bronzeville: Past, Present, Future

Location: 8th Street Lobby Pre-registration was required

Join us for a bike tour from historic Bronzeville up through Englewood to visit iconic Chicago neighborhoods that have experienced significant economic revitalization projects in recent years. Guiding the tour will be accomplished cyclists and community developers Calvin Holmes, CEO of the Chicago Community Loan Fund, and Ghian Foreman, CEO of Emerald South Economic Development Collaborative. They will provide an overview of the redevelopment and revitalization work happening in these communities, and share their expertise as lenders, developers, and community leaders. Expertise from within the Chicago Department of Planning and Development will also provide additional insight into the development from a public sector perspective. Some stops will include Englewood Square—a mixed-use retail development on the site of the formerly shuttered Englewood Mall—and XS Tennis—a community facility on the former grounds of the Robert Taylor homes. Bikes will be available to participants. Please dress appropriately for a two-hour bike ride.

SPEAKERS: Calvin Holmes, Chicago Community Loan Fund; Ghian Foreman, Emerald South Economic Development Collaborative

How Women Developers Are Championing Community Reinvestment in West Woodlawn, Chicago

Location: 8th Street Lobby Pre-registration was required

Women developers are making an impact in West Woodlawn. Not only are they overcoming hurdles of working in a predominantly male occupation, they have also led by example in championing the “Buy Back the Block” model. This concept of Buying Back the Block emphasizes community reinvestment *by* the community, *for* the community, and *with* the community, to build shared equity and wealth in long-under-resourced minority neighborhoods. Speakers will share examples of how minority and women developers have acquired and broken ground on vacant lots and distressed properties in West Woodlawn to transform them into quality housing for homeowners. Join this session to take away lessons on more inclusive development, working in urban areas that have seen decades of disinvestment, and maintaining quality while managing rising construction costs. This mobile workshop will show the power of investment to enable a place for residents and small businesses to thrive.

SPEAKERS: Bonita Harrison, Sunshine Management; Kathy O'Brien, O'Brien & O'Brien, LLC; Elisha Sanders, Cook County Land Bank Authority

Breakout Sessions #4

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Centering Community History in Data Collection and Vacant Land Reuse

Location: Williford B

In cities where disinvestment and oppressive, racist policy has led to large inventories of vacant land, we must ask an important question: How can we turn residents' stories and experiences into data that informs equitable land reuse? Good data on vacant land is essential to creating an equitable land recycling system rooted in antiracism and environmental justice. When determining the best end use of a vacant parcel, we must weigh the community's history of redlining, targeted disinvestment, and gentrification. In this session, speakers from Grounded Strategies in Pittsburgh will share how to unpack, reconcile, and operationalize data to prioritize resident voices in vacant land reuse. Attendees will learn how to create new scales and typologies of data collection that are powered by resident and community knowledge around parcel history and site conditions, and how to transform these into creative, community-driven solutions to vacant land.

SPEAKERS: Ariam Ford, Grounded Strategies; Rebecca Simon, Grounded Strategies

VAD is Global: How Other Countries Respond to Vacant Property Challenges **Location: Williford A**

The United States is neither the first nor the only country to battle vacant properties. Property abandonment and deterioration is a global problem, and US practitioners can gain valuable perspective on tackling vacancy from their international peers. In this session, we will discuss the global scale of vacancy and learn about creative strategies and efforts to address vacant property in Mexico and Scotland. We will also explore the challenges Eastern European countries face as they confront the legacy of thousands of aging Soviet-era apartment blocks.

SPEAKERS: Andrés Ampudia, Dirección de Vivienda del Ayuntamiento de Tlajomulco, México; Alan Mallach, Center for Community Progress; Andrew Moseley, Scottish Empty Homes Partnership; Eric Schertzing, Michigan Association of Land Banks

Harnessing the ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund to Address Vacancy and Strengthen Communities **Location: Williford C**

The American Rescue Plan Act's \$350 billion State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (ARPA SLFRF) is being deployed by every unit of state, territorial, Tribal, county, and local government. Communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic can use this unprecedented infusion of federal dollars to address vacancy and abandonment to make neighborhoods stronger and healthier. In this breakout session attendees will hear directly from leaders of large and small cities that are using ARPA SLFRF funding to tackle vacancy, improve housing conditions, and reinvest in neighborhoods. Attendees will come away with a better understanding of how these communities have designed programs to leverage other funding sources and respond to community needs, as well as how they are tracking their impact and handling federal ARPA SLFRF compliance requirements.

SPEAKERS: Rob Finn, Center for Community Progress; Payton Heins, Center for Community Progress; Cordaryl Patrick, City of Decatur, Illinois; Heather Zygmuntowicz, City of Detroit, Michigan

Reactivating “Lost Spaces” to Stabilize Neighborhoods and Prevent Displacement **Location: Waldorf**

As cities grapple with density and affordability, existing residents are put at even greater risk of displacement. Empowering communities to collectively identify, activate, and leverage vacant and deteriorated properties can create a new opportunity for affordable housing, stabilize neighborhoods, and enhance the social fabric. This session will highlight Houston's Lost Spaces tactical housing plan, which helps emerging developers reactivate communities in an equitable, sustainable way. Join this session to learn how building residents' capacity to collectively invest in land that was previously out of reach can transform the outcome for vulnerable neighborhoods facing gentrification.

SPEAKERS: Brittany Hyman, Third Ward Real Estate Council; Jason Hyman, Realinc

Strategic Code Enforcement Depends on Resident Trust: Models From Syracuse and Austin **Location: Marquette**

Empowering and engaging residents to improve their property conditions is key to equitable, effective strategic code enforcement. When code enforcement operations overcome tenant and residents' distrust, fear, and lack of confidence in the city, they can build genuine relationships and partnerships that empower tenants and residents to take charge in their communities. In this session, city staff from Syracuse, New York and Austin, Texas will discuss how they have built resident trust, strengthened relationships with systemically harmed Black and Brown tenants and residents, and developed partnerships with local nonprofits to support tenants' rights and efforts to improve neighborhood conditions.

SPEAKERS: Jan-Juba Arway, Cities Rise, Syracuse Peacemaking Project; Elizabeth Benton, Center for Community Progress; Jake Dishaw, City of Syracuse, New York; Stephen Frischmuth, Creek Edge Tenants Association; Shoshana Krieger, BASTA Austin; Michelle Sczpanski, City of Syracuse, New York; Daniel Word, City of Austin, Texas Code Department

Using Land to Help Communities Recover and Heal From Trauma

Location: Joliet

Land holds memories. As land uses and communities change over time, so too does our collective relationship with places. This session will highlight four locations in Cleveland, Ohio associated with trauma in the recent past and describe how each community rallied around the land to start a new chapter and begin to heal. Attendees to this session will come away with a better understanding of how to foster authentic partnerships in the face of trauma, hearing examples from a local public space development nonprofit, a neighborhood ministerial alliance, and a land conservancy. Panelists will also cover how communities can seek various forms of public and private funding to actualize the community vision without sacrificing authenticity, and developing representative community partnerships to create long-term impact.

SPEAKERS: Bianca Butts, Burten, Bell, Carr Development, Inc.; Isaac Robb, Western Reserve Land Conservancy; David Wilson, LAND studio

Plenary Session

4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

Same Address, Miles Apart: How the Folded Map Project™ Generates Conversations About Segregation in Chicago

Location: Intl. Ballroom North

Chicago is one of the most segregated cities in the United States, a direct result of racist housing policies over the course of more than a century. And while housing segregation has gradually declined over the past ten years, the disparities among white Chicago residents and residents of color remain.

Tonika Lewis Johnson, a visual artist and lifelong resident of the South Side neighborhood of Englewood, investigates inequality in her city while finding opportunities to bring Chicagoans together. Her Folded Map™ Project connects “map twins”—residents who live at corresponding addresses on opposite sides of Chicago (e.g., 123 South Main Street and 123 North Main Street). What started as a photographic study has evolved into a multimedia exploration that invites audiences to open a dialogue and question how we are all impacted by social, racial, and institutional conditions that segregate us.

Johnson’s goal is for people to understand how our segregated urban environment is structured and to challenge everyone to consider solutions. In this plenary, Johnson will be joined by “map twins” Jennifer Chan, Nanette Tucker, and Wade Wilson, as well as Eleanor Gorski, Executive Director of the Cook County Land Bank Authority, the local land bank which works with partners to redevelop areas of Cook County that have suffered from historic disinvestment and segregationist policies.

MODERATOR:

Eleanor Gorski,
Cook County Land
Bank Authority

SPEAKERS:

Tonika Lewis Johnson,
The Folded Map™ Project

Jennifer Chan,
Chicago Resident

Nanette Tucker,
Chicago Resident

Wade Wilson,
Chicago Resident

Session Descriptions

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Friday, September 9, 2022

Breakout Sessions #5

8:45 AM – 10:15 AM

Implementing Rental Regulation Programs to Improve Health and Advance Equity Location: Williford A

Rentals often make up the largest share of a city's problem properties. Deterioration of these properties disproportionately affects low-income renters and vulnerable residents. Rental regulation programs—including rental registration, inspection, and licensing programs—help improve the quality of life for tenants and neighbors, and help cities prevent vacancy by ensuring that properties remain habitable. In this session, we will share case studies of Rochester, New York and Racine, Wisconsin—two cities implementing innovative rental regulation programs. Representatives from these cities will share their lessons learned, including how to navigate the political and administrative hurdles of implementing a rental regulation program, strategies to mitigate potential adverse impacts on tenants, and how to use data to prioritize inspections and identify non-compliant owners.

SPEAKERS: Elizabeth Benton, Center for Community Progress; Andrew Kieve, Tolemi; Kelly Reed, Neighborhood Enhancement Division; Carol Wheeler, City of Rochester, New York

Large-Scale Adaptive Reuse: Case Studies From Buffalo and Memphis Location: Marquette

In cities across the country, the adaptive reuse of large-scale abandoned and vacant structures is critical to revitalizing neighborhoods and breathing life back into urban places. During this session, we will share how public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders in Memphis, Tennessee and Buffalo, New York are collaborating to repurpose large vacant structures into benefits for the community. Representatives from Memphis will share their experience of transforming an abandoned vocational high school into 270,000 square feet of mixed-use education, health care, housing, arts, and community-based services along with the challenges of surrounding residential and commercial uses. From Buffalo, attendees will learn about the master plan for the preservation and adaptive reuse of the Buffalo Central Terminal, a 500,000 square foot former train hub which closed in 1979. The 2020-21 planning process for the terminal illuminates challenges and lessons learned, including the physical reuse of a sprawling structure, the voice of the diverse community around it, and the financial tools and partners needed to bring the project to life.

SPEAKERS: Roshun Austin, The Works, Inc.; Dan Kinkead, SmithGroup; Monica Pellegrino Faix, Buffalo Central Terminal; Archie Willis, ComCap Partners

Supporting Developers of Color in Affordable Housing and Economic Development Location: Williford C

Smaller-scale, infill developers and community development corporations are a unique class of developers focused on meeting housing and economic needs of the most vulnerable communities. Often led by people of color and operating in communities with significant vacant and deteriorated properties, these corporations create residential and mixed-use projects using inclusionary, multi-stakeholder engagement. Despite their demonstrated impact, these developers consistently face financing challenges and capacity constraints rooted in structural and institutional racism. This session will share lessons from programs in Atlanta, Chicago, and Detroit which have connected small-scale developers of color to training, financing, and land to create stable, vibrant neighborhoods, and build generational wealth for Black residents. Attendees will leave better understanding the obstacles rooted in racism these developers face and community-building strategies to overcome them, and financing systems that advance community development.

SPEAKERS: Chase L. Cantrell, Building Community Value; Michael Davidson, The Chicago Community Trust; Avery Ebron, The Guild; Odetta MacLeish-White, Center for Community Progress

Case Studies of Vacancy, Abandonment, and Deterioration in Rural Areas Location: Joliet

Vacant and deteriorated property is not just an urban problem. Many rural communities across the United States are struggling with the same economic and social challenges as their metropolitan counterparts. In this session, presenters will provide an overview of rural property blight and share case studies from places like Cairo, Illinois and McDowell County, West Virginia. These case studies will cover communities already facing multiple threats to public health from AIDS and the opioid crisis, the economic fallout from the pandemic, the rising threat of climate change and natural disasters, and racial tensions. In small-group and breakout discussions, presenters will help attendees work through hypothetical scenarios related to code enforcement, flood recovery, and economic development in communities of less than 10,000 people. Attendees will come away better equipped to understand how to help rural communities build an equitable and resilient future.

SPEAKERS: Ann Eisenburg, University of South Carolina School of Law; Katherine Garvey, West Virginia University College of Law

Extreme Weather Events, Vacancy, and Recovery Location: Private Dining 2

From fires to floods, tornadoes, and blistering heat and cold, extreme weather disasters are leaving many American communities with a long road to recovery. In this session, practitioners from three cities impacted by significant storm events—each at different phases of recovery—will share first-hand accounts of how their communities are addressing climate-related vacancy. Attendees will learn how recovery efforts must contend with different aspects of vacant properties, opportunities and challenges to advance long-term resiliency, and what policy reforms could greatly improve a community's ability to recover from climate-induced disasters.

SPEAKERS: Tarik Abdelazim, Center for Community Progress; Luis Gallardo, Center for Habitat Reconstruction; Sarah Odio, Development Finance Initiative at UNC Chapel Hill School of Government

Home Repair: Designing a High-Impact Loan or Grant Program Location: Waldorf

Home repair is critical for building resilient and equitable communities. Too many low- and moderate-income owners have deferred much-needed maintenance on their homes. A good home repair program preserves older housing, improves the health and quality of life of occupants, helps lower-income owners achieve code compliance, and improves neighborhoods. This session will go in-depth into the types of home repair programs in use around the country, and the key decisions regarding eligibility, type of funding, maximum funding, contractors used, and other features that allow for the best use of limited resources in your community.

SPEAKERS: Karen Black, May 8 Consulting, Inc.; Cordaryl Patrick, City of Decatur, Illinois

Training Seminars #3

10:45 AM – 12:15 PM

Building Community Power Through Public Spaces

Location: Private Dining 4 Pre-registration was required

Public spaces are not just physical infrastructure—they're social infrastructure that strengthens relationships, identity, and power within a community. A key element of increasing the social impact of a public space is authentic, equitable community engagement. In this training, presenters will offer tools and strategies for engaging communities early in the process of transforming a vacant lot, with an eye towards nurturing a community's social capital. Hear from local leaders in Chicago's Woodlawn neighborhood and learn about their vision of an "emerald necklace" of community gardens that honors the neighborhood's rich Black history.

SPEAKERS: Cary Simmons, Trust for Public Land; Naomi Davis, Blacks in Green

Tracking and Communicating Your Impact

Location: Private Dining 2 Pre-registration was required

Successfully communicating impact to funders, boards of directors, and community members is critical to sustaining revitalization work. By tracking the right metrics and weaving a compelling story that captures your accomplishments, you can engage stakeholders around a vision for the future. In this training, we will share tips and best practices for collecting data and weaving it into stories that help you advance the work. Participants in this session will come away with examples of how to use data and impact reports to further their mission.

SPEAKERS: Brian Larkin, Center for Community Progress; Natalie Pruet, Pruet Analytics & Impact

Breakout Sessions #6

10:45 AM – 12:15 PM

Art as a Community Development Tool: A Look at INVEST South/West

Location: Williford A

Chicago's West and South Sides have experienced disinvestment for decades. Prime commercial corridors in these communities have underutilized or empty storefronts, as well as many vacant lots. INVEST South/West is a community revitalization initiative launched by Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot to reverse disinvestment within ten neighborhoods on the West and South Sides. Using South Chicago as a case study, this session will detail how INVEST South/West is transforming commercial corridors to support small businesses and restore historic buildings, fostering equity and resilience where it's needed most. This session will also look at a start-up effort to convert a historic masonic temple into the anchor for an arts corridor.

SPEAKERS: Maurice D. Cox, City of Chicago, Department of Planning and Development; Margaret Decker, City of Chicago, Office of the Mayor; Angela Hurlock, Claretian Associates; A.J. Patton, 548 Development; Jorge Perez, Lake Effect Community Development; Lee Reed, Revere Properties; Jack Rocha, UIC Great Cities Institute

Disrupting Exploitive Property Tax Systems: How Communities Can Examine and Reform Their Practices for Public Good Location: Joliet

Delinquent property tax enforcement is a powerful tool to interrupt the cycle of decline. It can ensure problem properties end up in responsible hands and become assets to the neighborhood. However, in many places, property tax enforcement is inefficient, ineffective, and inequitable. Join us in this session to get a foundation in the basic frameworks of property tax enforcement and understand how your community can evaluate its property tax enforcement system. Hear from communities that are engaging those most impacted by exploitive tax systems and reforming their local and state policies to leverage this tool to address vacant properties while protecting vulnerable owners from displacement.

SPEAKERS: Kim Graziani, Center for Community Progress; Nneka Nnamdi, Fight Blight Bmore; Kevin Windham Jr., District 085, Missouri General Assembly

Data-Driven, Cross-Agency Approaches to Transform Code Enforcement

Location: Williford B

Addressing distressed properties requires local governments to shift how they approach code enforcement—from reactive, siloed, punitive approaches, to approaches that are preventative, holistic, and focused on positive social outcomes. The Innovation Field Lab (IFL) at Harvard's Kennedy School will share the results of over eight years of work in more than fifteen cities in Massachusetts and New York to develop data-driven, cross-agency approaches to dealing with deteriorated properties. Panelists will share the results of several studies on innovation and cross-agency collaboration, including a project that connected social workers with housing inspectors in Chelsea, Massachusetts and a study using landlord data to predict evictions in Rochester, New York. The session will then feature Buffalo's Clean Sweep Program, a large-scale program uniting city staff and community partners once a week to perform rapid blight remediation and community outreach. Buffalo's Director of Citizen Services will present the program's adaptive solutions, challenges, and influence. A community leader will describe how the program has transformed the different communities it serves. The IFL team will present the study results on if, why, and how the program achieves impact. Attendees will walk away with results of cutting-edge research on revitalizing distressed neighborhoods, practical ideas to adopt in their own cities, and a diagnostic tool that they can use to transform their cities' approach to preventing or remedying deteriorated properties.

SPEAKERS: Jorrit De Jong, Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government and Bloomberg Center for Cities; Ellen Harris Harvey, Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government; Oswaldo Mestre, City of Buffalo, New York, Division of Citizen Services; Katharine Robb, Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government; Lindsay Woodson, Harvard University, Bloomberg Center for Cities

How Public-Private Land Bank Partnerships Can Foster Equitable

Revitalization and Affordable Housing Opportunities **Location: Waldorf**

The Albany County Land Bank will share the results of an innovative and ambitious project launched in 2019 that resulted in the redevelopment of dozens of clustered vacant properties into affordable townhomes, rental buildings, and community service hubs. In a first-of-its-kind partnership, the land bank was able to combine the experience of an established private housing developer with the site control and access to community groups of a land bank. This partnership created opportunities for equity in Albany's South End—a previously redlined, underserved, majority-Black neighborhood. This session will cover how land banking can successfully create reinvestment opportunities in historically underserved communities, demonstrate how land banks can attract private investment into these communities, and explain how to develop a strategy for revitalization that accounts for multiple community priorities.

SPEAKERS: Will Sikula, Albany County Land Bank; Adam Zaranko, Albany County Land Bank

Navigating Vacant Properties Through the Brownfield Process: How to Meet Requirements, Access Data, and Secure Funding **Location: Marquette**

Brownfields—previously developed but now unused and/or contaminated land—can be notoriously difficult to turn from liabilities to benefits for the community and the environment. Many brownfields are in environmental justice communities, where people of color bear the brunt of the legacy of environmental contamination. While the basic practices for brownfield redevelopment are applicable anywhere, understanding the requirements and accessing the resources to successfully drive brownfield redevelopment can be complicated and expensive. In this session, experts will walk participants through the unique circumstances of brownfield redevelopment: (1) the necessary steps around site due diligence and agency approvals, (2) data gathering, and (3) identifying state and federal funding for planning, assessment, and clean-up. With the goal of advancing equitable redevelopment and improved environmental outcomes in environmental justice communities, this breakout session will provide participants with a foundational understanding of the process and resources for revitalizing vacant brownfield sites.

SPEAKERS: Jack Eskin, Delta Institute, Beth Grigsby, Kansas State University, TAB Program; Kathy Luther, Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission; Steven Meyer, Intend Indiana; Stephanie Quick, Intend Indiana; Bill Schleizer, Delta Institute

Activating Vacant Lots to Promote Climate Resiliency Location: Williford C

With more impervious surfaces and minimal tree canopies, cities are particularly at risk of the effects of climate change as extreme weather events become more frequent and intense. Vacant lots offer an overlooked opportunity to mitigate some of the effects of climate change in dense urban centers. In this session, participants will learn how vacant land stewardship can contribute to climate resilience through stormwater management, urban farming, solar power generation, and more. Our panel will share several examples of innovative vacant land reuse projects that can highlight how, in places where space is at a premium, underutilized parcels can be turned into benefits for the environment.

SPEAKERS: Janell O'Keefe, Center for Community Progress; Evaine K. Sing, EKS Solutions LLC; Brenda Scott-Henry, City of Gary, Indiana Office of Sustainability; Abby Aldrich, Toledo Community Foundation

Closing Plenary

12:30 PM – 2:00 PM

Responding to Crisis: Building an Equitable and Resilient Future

Location: Intl. Ballroom North

All available data shows that communities of color are disproportionately harmed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the growing frequency of extreme weather events, and the legacy of racist land use and housing policies and practices. These crises have fueled displacement, disinvestment, and the growing concentration of vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties in Black and Brown neighborhoods. Amid these crises, however, there is an urgent opportunity. Philanthropy can play a key role in community recovery to help ensure communities don't just survive these crises, but emerge stronger and thrive. In our final plenary session, leaders of national philanthropic organizations—including the Surdna Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Melville Charitable Trust—will inspire you to radically envision an equitable future where all people live in sustainable, healthy communities.

MODERATOR:

Tené Traylor,
Urban Institute

SPEAKERS:

Richard Besser,
Robert Wood Johnson
Foundation

Susan Thomas,
Melville Charitable
Trust

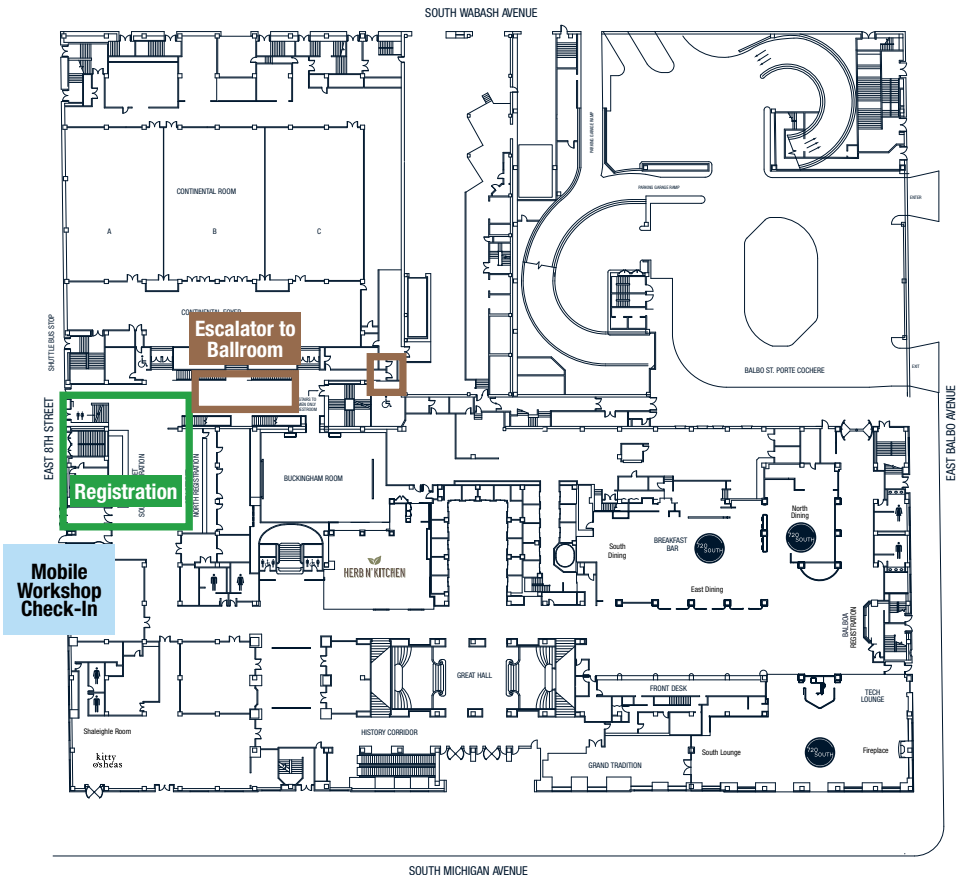
Don Chen,
Surdna Foundation



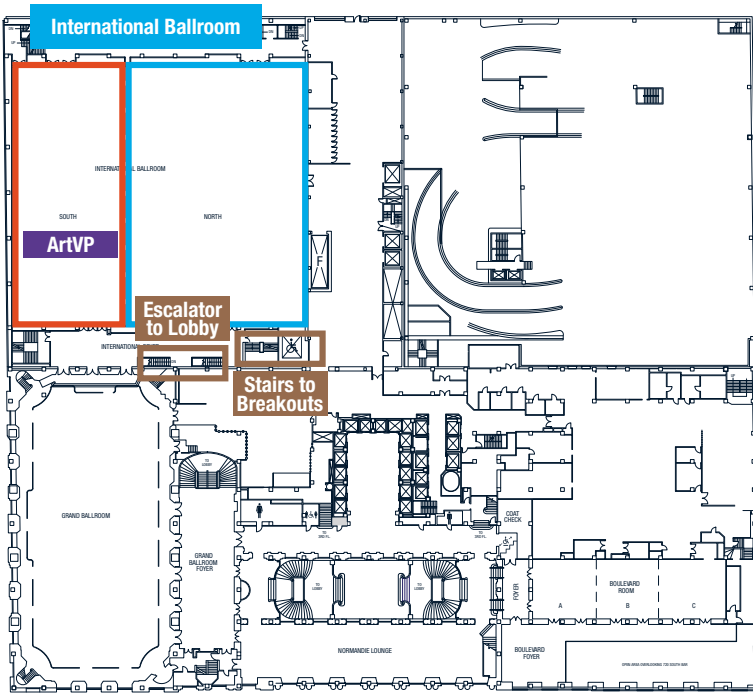
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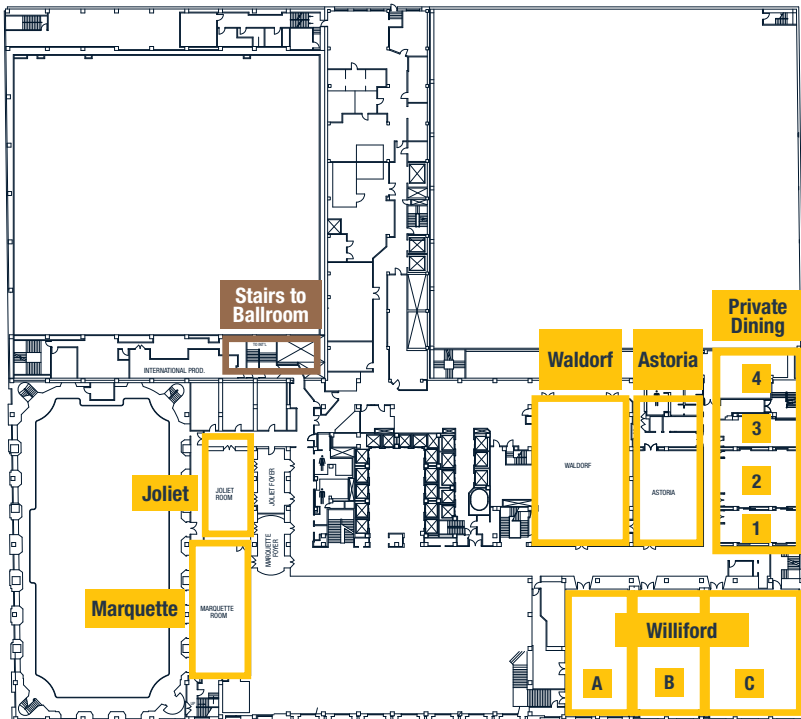
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SECOND FLOOR



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Center for Community Progress

Reclaiming Vacant Properties

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